

## sheer by Pudrifu

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** 2 to 3 years after season 2, Billy Hargrove Being an Asshole, Business, Drugged Sex, Dubious Consent, Fluff and Hurt/Comfort, Friends to Lovers, Helping a friend out, Idiots in Love, Implied jonathan/nancy/steve, M/M, New York, Non-Consensual Drug Use, Past Steve Harrington/Nancy Wheeler, Physical Abuse, Pre-Billy Hargrove/Steve Harrington, Relationship Problems, Romantic Friendship, Sexual Abuse, Slow Burn, kind of college au, past Jonathan Byers/ Nancy Wheeler, student

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Billy Hargrove, Dustin Henderson, Eric (Stranger Things), Jonathan Byers, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington

**Relationships:** Jonathan Byers/Steve Harrington

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**Summary:**

„Steve H-Harrington?“ Jonathans voice was shy, unsure if he was right with his assumption. With only a few steps he came closer to the man, cleared his throat as he stood nearly beside him. He repeated his qestion, this time certain. „Steve Harrington?“ The man in the dark coat tensed up, he stopped his movements and looked at the guy who dared to talk to him from the corner of his eyes. As the stranger looked Jonathan in the eyes he was totally certain that this man was Steve Harrington. The man grew pale, terror in his countenance. Jonathan stepped a little back and avoided his gaze. He looked at the mans jacket. „You probably don’t remember me.“ Jonathan shrugged a little. „It’s me Jonathan Byers.“ The strange mans nostrils got a little bigger, as he inhaled the air sharply through them. „Excuse me?“

His voice sounded a little hoarse, but it totally was Steve Harringtons voice. It was Steve, even though he looked different from the image that still lingered in Jonathans head. He looked somehow...unkempt, the hair even longer, without any form of styling, slicked back and kind of messy and oily, he had grown a beard too, though it wasn't quite thick.. „I...ehm... it's you, isn't it Steve? From Hawkins?“

## 1. strange encounter

### Summary for the Chapter:

So this Story takes place two to three years after Season 2. The events in Stranger things did not happen. Will really got lost in the woods, Eleven is Hoppers adopted child and so on. So the gang is about 16 while Steve and Jonathan are about 20-21 something like that.

Jonathan finally got into University in New York and one day as he was shopping some groceries he saw a familiar face, though that person looked like a nightmarish version of Jonathans glorious Memory.

„kay, and at last bread.“ Jonathan walked through the aisles of the supermarket he was in, searching for the rest of the supplies he needed. He already held some products in his arms, a package of sliced cheese, marmelade, sliced ham, the only thing he lacked was bread. It really was hard enough to pay the college tuition, he had to save money and if it meant that he had to save that money while choosing his food then it had to be that way. One aisle of Sweets, one aisle of bakery products, one aisle of hard liquor. Wait, he needed bread. Jonathan went one aisle back. Without further ado he grabbed the oh so needed bread und stared into the void in front of his eyes. His body moved before his head does and he was back in the aisle with bottles of hard liquors. He stared down the aisle and watched a man looking at the bottles. The man touched some price tags, watched those bottles, put a hand in his jacket pocket and looked at the coins he had in his hands. Jonathan swore he knew that face, it was familiar to him. It was not a face he came to know here in New York, it was a face he recognized from the time in Hawkins.

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„You got the wrong one, probably mistook me, man.“He avoided to look at Jonathan and rushed past Jonathan, bumped his shoulder on the way. Jonathan looked back at the stranger, pure confusion in his thoughts, as he picked up the bread from the floor.

That man is Steve Harrington, King Steve, Nancys ex-boyfriend, one of the best looking, probably the best looking guy in Hawkins.... unkempt, oily hair, bearded and a smell that reeked of sweat and liquor. The exact opposite of the mighty King Steve, like he sat enthroned in his memories, the king of Hawkins High. The ex-king of Hawkins High as Billy Hargrove took over that title some years ago. Was he right or did he really mistook some random guy for him? He didn't waste any time when he got home. Immediately he put up the phone and called the only number that could probably give him an answer. It took some time before someone got on the phone and without waiting Jonathan sighed relieved.

„Nancy?“ He spoke immediately.

„Nope, this is Mike.“ He was a little disappointed.

„Sorry Mike, this is Jonathan.“

„Jonathan! Hey, How's New York? Will always tells me a bit... but it

only sound like work all day and all night. Wednesday he works in the theatre, Sunday carwash and so on and so on... blablabla.“ One could hear from Mike's voice that he was excited talking to Jonathan.

„Well, that's my life in a nutshell. Really, it even feels like I'm only working, sleeping, studying. Time's missing you know.“ It's always just eat, sleep, repeat. He really wished for more time, or less work, though less work equals less money and that was certainly something he could not afford.

„Maybe if you've got a little time we can visit you? I think New York would be quite amazing!“

„It's...okay. I would be glad if you all could come and visit me, maybe i can pick you up and you all could stay a weekend at my place and crash at my place. The cinema's terrific.“ It would be quite a nice alternation to his boring lifestyle. He felt even more socially isolated than some years ago.

„That would be amazing!“ Mike grinned wide and looked into the living room. Elv was dancing a little to the music the TV showed.

„Yeah.... say, could you tell Nancy that I have to talk to her, it's important!“

„Hm,“ he heard Mike's voice buzzing through the handset. „She's over at a friend's house, please don't ask which friend. I don't even know them.“ Damn, Nancy.... come on. Jonathan really needed to talk to her.

„Oh, alright. Maybe you can help me?“ He needed answers, right now! His only connection to the world of the young adults of Hawkins was Nancy, well now Mike had to be that connection.

„Ehm, okay. Bring it on then.“ Mike sounded surprised.

„Do you by any chance know what Steve Harrington's doing for a living at the moment?“

Mike sighed deeply on the phone. „I totally don't have any idea but Dustin could be of greater help if it's about Steve.“ Right. Right! Dustin and Steve have been friends quite a while back then, why didn

‘t he think of that?

„Great! Thanks Mike. About the weekend... I try to clear my schedule a little okay? I promise.“

„Awsome! Thanks Jonathan, see you.“ Mike hung up the phone when Jonathan said his greetings and the older could breath freely as he locked down to his shoes. He still wore his boots and jacket. He should take these off first. He didn’t know where his interest in Harringtons life came from, what that got to do with him. Maybe because he saw some face he think he knows from his hometown here in New York. Back then he considered Steve and him somehow friends. They hung out right after he got together with Nancy. Interestingly they had no problems, Steve didn’t play the great king and he had felt like he could talk to Steve about everything. But that lasted only a while.

Jonathan took off his shoes and jacket. It was quite cold outside, since it was January, snow lay on the ground. He just was glad that New York was warmer than Hawkins. Leaning back he dialed Dustins Phonenumber and waited until someone got on the phone.

„Henderson.“ A female voice. Too old for a girlfriend, probably Mrs. Henderson.

„Good Evening Mrs. Henderson. Jonathan Byers here. Is Dustin home?

„Oh Joyces’big son. Yes he’s home, wait a minute. I’ll go get him.“ Jonathan thanked her and he could hear her get away from the phone, calling Dustins name. It was in fact so loud he had to get away a little himself.

„Yeah, yeah. I’m coming. So Grandmaster Dustin here, who dares to call?“ Jonathan was a little dumbfounded, as always when it involves Dustin.

„Ehm... yeah... Jonathan Byers.“

„Ohhh! Big city man! How’s it going, we havenn’t heard from you in a while!“Jonathan grinned wide, he couldn’t deny that he liked the

feeling he got when he called his friends, when he knew they missed him just as much as he missed all of them.

„I’m sorry. I really try to visit at least once a month.“

„That’s alright man, I bet you’ve got a lot to do. Will always tells us about that crazy amount you have to study. So what’s the deal?“  
Dustins lisp didn’t get better in all this time.

„You and Steve are pretty good buddies, what’s he doing for a living at the moment?“

Silence was on the line and Jonathan knew he had fucked up. Dustin sat down besides the phone and leaned back against the wall. „If he still had been in Hawkins , I guess we still would have been pretty good friends. I haven’t heard from him in six months.“ Dustin sounded disappointed.

„Okay, but he can’t vanish like that.“ It all sounded so weird in Jonathans ears.

„The only thing I know is that he went to New York. Everybody goes to New York. What’s so good about that stupid city? Something about some business and it all went well and all of a sudden he didn’t call anymore. Not a call, nor a letter. Imagine this I even went to his parents house but they didn’t even talk to me. To me it seemed like they were angry when topic Steve was mentioned. They just told me ‘That got nothing to do with you Dustin’! Imagine that!“ Dustin inhaled harshly, Jonathan could hear his voice raging a little. He just listened to him. „I really liked that Dumbass, he was like the big brother I don’t have and then he just vanishes. I really feel like shit Jonathan. Lucas got Max. Mike got Elv. Will got you and I got nobody again.“ His voice shivered hard, hitching at some notes.

„I’m so sorry Dustin.“

„I-it was really nice t-talking to you okay... I... I got important t-things to d-do...bye Jonathan.“

„Dustin wait, about...“

Dustin hung up faster than Jonathan could finish his sentence. He

really wanted to tell him about that man today and that he thought it was Steve. He didn't know that Steve was a sensitive topic with Dustin. He needed to call him again the next few days and apologize. He was too insensitive. He put the phone back und layed his head onto the backrest of the couch. So it was New York then, right? Maybe he didn't mix that guy up. He closed his eyelids and tried to remember the face in the supermarket. He looked so filthy, if this guy really had been Steve Harrington.... then what the hell had happened to him?



## 2. changes

Startled Jonathan awoke from sleep und rubbed the rest of his tirement out of his eyes as the phone rang.

"Fucking shit Jonathan! Pick up the damn phone!" Jonathan could hear Erics sleepdrunken roar. As fast as he could, he got up on his legs and walked silently through the apartment. He yawned as he picked up the phone.

"Mhm, Byers?"

"Thank God, Jonathan! I tried to call you for at least five days!" He could hear Nancys upset voice on the phone. "One needs luck to catch you on the phone!" Jonathan rubbed his eyes again and looked at the watch that hang on the wall, 6.20 am.

"I'm sorry Nancy. I just have so much to do at the time. I don't know, I'm sorry." Jonathan really felt guilty. He didn't want to slide her or his family, but he had his priorities.

"No, I'm sorry that I woke you up this early, but I can't catch you in the afternoon nor the evening. So I thought that I better try it in the morning. You work way too much Sweetie." She laughed and a slight smile grew on Jonathans lips. "It's alright, sounds worse than it is." That was understated, it was hell.

"Mike told me last week that you called me and that it was important." Jonathan didn't forget that but he couldn't call the Wheeler household after 10 pm when he got home. That was way too late. "And he said that you asked him lots about Steve. Do you know where he is?"

"Nancy, listen. I met some guy at the supermarket, who looked exactly like Steve. I asked him if it's really him but he denied." He left out the thing with the filthy outfit and messy hair. "I just wanted to know if Steve is still in Hawkins." Silence, nothing but silence for a few moments.

"Damn Jonathan. Did you see him?" Her voice shivered, he could hear her worry. "I haven't heard from him in nearly six months. He went to New York with that birdbrain Billy and wanted to open some

business. Some kind of Pub or something. I don't really know he never really talked to me about that. His parents are royally pissed and some day he didn't call anymore and everything was over. The last time he called me he didn't sound so great, like he had a lot on his mind." Nancy worried a lot. "I mean he had always called me. I... thought he was... you know ....like Barb." She swallowed hard and sighed. It made Jonathans heart heavy to hear her like that.

"Nancy I think it was Steve. Well, he denied it but... it was so strange." He thought back to the meeting with him. The way the other man had looked away, like it was embarrassing for him to be recognised. "Jonathan? Please, if you see him again don't let him go. I bet this is about Billy." Of course he wouldn't let him slip away, not because of Nancy because he wanted to know that himself. He wanted to know if he was right or wrong.

"I call you if there's more information." He promised. "Well, at least I'm awake now and can do some more things today. Take care Nancy."

"Please be careful and don't forget to call! It's alright to call at night too, doesn't matter! I explain everything to my parents somehow. Thanks a lot!" She hung up and buried her face in her hands. No signs from Steve in such a long time and now he appeared again all of a sudden? She shouldn't have too much expectations. That never ended well.

Nancy worried so much, well he did too. Just to be realistic, what chances did he have to meet Steve again in a city like New York?

"Who the fuck is calling this freaking early?"

Jonathan really tried hard to ignore Eric's yelling and made his way into the kitchen, making himself a sandwich and after that searching some of his clothes to get into. He washed his hands and face and put on his shoes, grabbed his camera. Without any further ado he left the apartment. It still was freaking early but at least he had some time before he had to get to work. He had thought about a lot of topics he could choose for the Essay he needed to finish and eventually he decided that he wanted to picture the underbelly of New York, the downside. He wanted to show the many homeless people, their lifestyle, their lives, their struggle. Jonathan actually did already contact some of the people he liked to picture, he had talked to them

and of course he had asked if it was alright for them if he took pictures. In exchange he took some food with him and gave it to them, things he could afford.

It was interesting, not nice to see, but still interesting. All the businessmen in New York walked down the main road or drove it down with their overly expensive cars and at the same time so many homeless scattered in abandoned buildings or on the streets hoping to get some money or food. Some of them already knew his name and he knew theirs, one could say what he wanted about the homeless unless they didn't use drugs or abuse alcohol the most were such nice and friendly people.

There was an elderly women, some years older than his mom, an older darkskinned man with grey hair who called himself Barry. Sometimes it seems like they've been a couple for years. There was a middle aged woman too, he didn't know her name he just knew that she escaped prostitution .

Jonathan saw the building, probably an old warehouse. He decided to grab some food from the supermarket across the street and got into the building right afer, through a shattered side entrance. It smelled inside, like dust and old books. He saw the group in the middle of the room, scattered in a circle and in the middle was a burning bin.

"Look who came to visit! Jonny-boy!" Jonathan could hear the dark voice of the darkskinned man named Barry. "It's just Jonathan." Jonathan smiled shyly and walked over to them and stood right beside in front of the bin. He gave Barry the food. "I brought you a little something."

The elderly man looked down at the products in his hand, as the older woman came up to him, took the food and shared it among their people. "Thanks man, but one poor student doesn't have to help us guys out." Jonathans smile vanished and he looked into the burning flame, he outstretched his arms and warmed his hands. "I'd like to take some photographs again. If that's alright with you." Some of them laughed wholeheartedly, others just nodded and ate. Jonathan didn't waste any time he got right to the work and took pictures of the group, some faces to capture their emotions and the building. It was a really nice experience. Pictures sometimes say more than words. The Group had grown in size since the last time he saw

them. Christmas time was over maybe that meant that many lost their jobs or something else and ended on the streets. "I would like to be of greater help if I could." Jonathan looked down at his camera and stared at the lense. He knew he couldn't do much, he didn't have the money nor the influence to change the situation of these people.

"Hey hey big boy, we're quite happy with our life, it's no luxury mansion nor do we always have enough food but at least we're a-" The former prostitute put an arm around Jonathans shoulder, he tensed. She started coughing, putting her free hand in front of her mouth. "... at least... we're alive honey."

Barry nodded and put some of the dry food in his hands and handed it over to Jonathan, he held the young mans hand and looked at him, the food in between their hands. "If you really want to change something how about you bring this to the poor soul in the back of the building. That boys sleeping between the trash cans in this cold weather. Every time someone of our group gets near him he's up and away. Tell him he's welcome here. It's better to share ones problems than to drown in his own misery. You can't change the whole situation Jonny-boy but at least you can make it a bit better for that poor guy." Barry withdrew his hand and Jonathan looked at the food and nodded. He got an uneasy feeling, what if this guy was pumped up with drugs it would be quite dangerous . He figured he at least had to try it. He wanted to do something and nothing would happen to him. "Okay, I give it to him. Thanks for the pictures. I hope business gets better for you even with this poor weather. Take care." Jonathan waved his hand goodbye and left the building. In the back, in between the trash cans. As he got to the right area he could see the trash cans and a huge pile of cardboard. Tat guy was probably underneath tha pile to keep himself warm. Jonathan swallowed the lump in his throat and brought up all his courage as he got closer. "Hey." He tried to talk to him first, that was the safest way. The situationn got mor precarious as the seconds flew by and no answer was received. He was getting uneasier each moment. What if that guy froze to death out here over night? Was this the first time he came to see a corpse? Anxiety hit him and rushed through every limb. "H-hey I.... I got some food for you. I bet you are hungry right? The others in the building said..."

A moan came out beneath the pile of cardboard while they moved. "And what the hell do you want for that?"

Jonathan looked at that pile. What he wanted? Nothing. He wanted nothing. He just wanted to help, nothing more. "I... I just wanted to help, you owe me nothing."

The voice of the poor guy was husky, sounding sick. It was rattling, sounding like pneumonia or a damaged smoker's lung.

"Everybody wants something, money, sex or some other shit." This voice. The cardboards were moved aside and Jonathan could see the man underneath that pile, oily hair, thin beard, handsome face underneath. He gulped down some sips of the bottle he bought some days ago. Liquor. "Steve?" Jonathan grew pale and the man stared down at Jonathan's shoes. "Said you're mixing me up man. Who the hell is that Steve Harrington?"

Jonathan crouched down and looked the guy in the face. He held out the food to him. Steve snatched the food immediately and stuffed his mouth with it. He looked way thinner. "Steve, cut the crap. I know it's you. What are you doing here?" Jonathan didn't only sound concerned, he was concerned. It showed on his face. It all made no sense to him, Steve's parents had a lot of money. No sense at all.

"Fuck that Jonathan, can't you just leave me alone?" His voice was stern yet ruffled. He swallowed down his food and gulped down some sips again.

"What the.... Steve!" Jonathan put a hand on Steve's shoulder and expected some answers. Roughly Steve withdrew the touch and moved the rest of the cardboards aside. The liquor bottle was placed besides him on the cardboard he slept on. It was wet and in this weather ice cold. Steve was silent, staring into some void. Jonathan could feel his body cramping looking at Steve. How could that happen to his friend?

"You don't owe me answers but let me help you, please." Jonathan looked down at the bottle and frowned. "That isn't helping you out of this situation Steve." He pointed at the liquor bottle.

Steve just shrugged. "At least it keeps me warm." It felt warm when he drank it, though his limbs felt numb.

"It helps you freeze to death even faster. Alcohol dilutes the blood... Man Steve... I... I mean..." Jonathan was shocked. Steve breathed

harshly and got on his knees wobbly, trying to stand up. He coughed, it sounded rattling.

"Really save that damn compassion for someone else, Byers. It's my business." Steve's voice got lost on the way, getting weaker and huskier with each word. Jonathan stood up, rubbed over his cold nose and breathed into his palms, rubbed his hands together. "I want to help you Steve, please. I..." It was a dumb idea but the only one he could come up with at the moment. "My apartment is right around here, you can stay as long as you want." Steve stared at him, he could see how drunk he really was in his eyes. Steve shook his head wildly. "You're crazy. Plain crazy."

Jonathan felt rejected. "You're a nice guy, like always Byers but no." Steve shoved him aside. "Just leave me the hell alone."

"Steve if you don't want my help then that's alright but at least get into the building, it's way warmer in there than out here!" Steve didn't look at Jonathan as he moved waveringly around the corner and vanished.

It was hard to concentrate on work. Jonathan thought a lot about Steve and what probably could have happen to him. One thousand scenarios that rushed through his head. It was Sunday and Sunday meant carwash. In the Winter time it was quite silent. Most of the people did not want to wash their cars in winter because it got dirty again and that quite fast with all the snow and the mud. He had time to study while he sat and waited for the time to go by. This little learning session didn't last long, he laid the book aside. The only thing in his mind was Steve. He had to think, now.

Eric would probably be at a sportsbar to drink and of course watch or listen to the sports programm. That meant that he would be home late, good. Probably even later than Jonathan. At least he had to try to get Steve to stay at his house. He figured that if he stayed on the streets like that he would die of exposure. His friend already sounded bad. And Eric.... well that could wait he would somehow explain that situation to him. Jonathan looked at the watch again. Only twenty minutes left of his shift. He had to take a look at the abandoned warehouse again maybe Steve was still there.

Jonathan's part-time job at the carwash was only a few streets away from his apartment and on his way home he got past the warehouse.

He saw a flickering light through the high windows. He figured Barry and the others were still inside and maybe... maybe Steve was with them.

"Queer filth! Get your ass up you fucking faggot!" Jonathan could hear the shouting, disgusting laughter. Without hesitation he followed the voices and heard muffled sounds which got him to remember memories he wished he forgot. Meat hitting meat like a punching bag. A pained moan. He followed the sounds to a sidestreet right beside the warehouse. In the darknes he could see three men standing and one....

A shocking sight! One of the men kicked the person lying on the ground, again and again and again, while the other laughed and slurred obscenities. "Ten Bucks? You're freaking kidding, you should pay me instead!"

"Hey!" Jonathan was nervous but his voice was stern and he yelled loud. "Police!" The three men stopped and ran. One said something like "I'm outta here!" They rushed around the corner. Jonathan ran to the man lying on the ground nearly falling with his steps as the snow was slippery. He immediately dropped to his knees and realized that this guy that was beaten to a pulp was Steve. His eye was black and swollen cheeks angry red and the lip splitted, all over his face blood. Steve lay still, just breathing, pressing his hands to his stomach, moaning. Though the swollen eye he watched the man that had dropped to his knees right beside him. "Jonathan? You...Dumbass... I told you to... leave me...alone." Steve coughed, moaned, pain clearly shown in his voice. He pressed his hands to his stomach.

"Look at yourself! Please just accept my help, come on." Jonathan nearly begged, whispering those words with worry in his mind. He held out a hand to him to help him get up. Steves face twisted in a painful expression. "I'm just trash. You should leave me here to fucking die." What the hell happened to him? Jonathan grabbed Steves Hand and dragged him to his feet. "You're..." Jonathan put one of Steves arms around his shoulder to support him. "You're not trash Steve. Don't say that, come on." Jonathan wanted to cheer him up a little. It was still hard for him to socialize and compliment someone. He dragged him to his Apartment, it was really just a few houses down the road.

Jonathan was glad his assumption proved itself to be right about Eric. He would presumably get drunk at some kind of bar and listening to the current sports. As they got into the apartment, Jonathan closed the door behind them and dragged Steve right into the little bathroom. It was not modern nor fancy, it just had a sink, a toilet and an old and used bathtub but it served its purpose. Careful he looked after Steve as he sat down on the edge of the bathtub. Steve leaned forward put his elbows on his knees and buried his face in his dirty hands. Strands of oily hair fell in front of his face. The rattling breathing was even better to hear in the silent apartment. Steve murmured to himself. Jonathan tried to breathe slowly, the smell was even worse in a closed room. Sweat and liquor. "Let me think..." Jonathan paced up and down the small room, from side to side. He rested a hand on his own mouth, thoughtful. It took some moments of intensifying nervousness until he continued. "Okay, okay, alright. The most reasonable action right now is to get you clean first, I think. After that I take care of those cuts and bruises and then.... then I-I ....I think of the rest later."

Again the murmuring. Jonathan looked down at Steve, he looked like shit drowning in misery. "Sorry, I didn't catch that?" Steve looked up, looked Jonathan right into the eyes just for a second. "Said... don't get you. All of this... why do you want to help me?"

Jonathan looked concerned. "You can question my cryptic motives later. Just accept it, please." Jonathan got out of the bathroom and rummaged around his room, searching for some clothing that could fit Steve and some towels. "Did you just make a joke?" Jonathan grinned wide as he heard Steve's croaking from the bathroom. He tried to hide his grin pretty hard when he got back into the room. "Maybe I just did that. Towels, clothes, bodywash is in the cabinet. I-I..." he stammered a little. "It's not awesome nor super comfortable but please feel at home." With these words he turned on his heels and left the bathroom, he closed the door behind him but didn't catch the lock clicking. "Steve, it's still unlocked," He waited one more moment until he got an answer.

"I know." Alright, no locking. Jonathan shrugged, how the hell did he want to explain that to Eric... this was just some impulse he had back then though it was the right thing. No locking... he could live with that, there were things worse.

As Jonathan got right into the kitchen he sliced some vegetables to



cook a soup. Something warm would hopefully help Steve to recover slowly and the vitamins.... shit he sounded like some mother hen or something. He still couldn't realize that Steve Harrington was here in New York, in his Apartment, dirty and reeking. He wanted to know more about that situation of his but didn't want to rush him into talking. If this visit was in different circumstances he would be quite happy to see him, now he was more worried than anything.

The boiling water hissed and he put the vegetables in it and seasoned the soup with salt and pepper. It's been a while since he saw Steve's face. The oh so spotless and handsome face. He had always been one of the popular kids, even when Billy took over his title as king, nice body, handsome look and a ... mostly nice character though you had to get used to him. Now he had just been a shadow of himself. Should Jonathan call Nancy? It was not that late but he felt nervous as hell. He couldn't talk to Nancy right now. He had to cool his head and then call her. First he had to tell her the whole story not that he just saw Steve but in what condition Steve was in.

Jonathan placed a bowl of soup on the coffee table in front of the run down couch. He grabbed a glass of water and placed it besides the bowl.

This whole scenario was so unpredictable but he had no other way to help him, had he? He couldn't have left him dying in the cold outside. Again he looked at the watch 9 pm and it already was dark outside. Steve had been in the bathroom for more than a hour by now, maybe he was too worried but he walked over to the door and knocked on it. "Are you alright?" No sounds of running water, no sounds at all just a squeaking as the door opened and steam flowed out into the cooler living room.

Jonathan hemmed and saw the clothed body, his face and looked softly into Steve's eyes only to withdraw his gaze and look at the floor between them. There it was, that soft smile that Steve wore in his memories too. He blushed a little and realized how awkward this whole situation felt.

"I feel human again." Steve's smile grew to a grin. He smelled way better too. "I took one of those parcelled toothbrushes, that alright?"

"Of ...course. May I take a look at your bruises? P-please." Jonathan felt uneasy as he pointed to the rundown couch. It was quite a difference once all that grime and dirt was washed away and the

clothing was clean. Steve slowly paced over and sat down, leaning back and closing his eyes relaxed. Jonathan sat down beside him with a bit space between them and just watched Steve fascinated. He watched the line of his jaw clenching a little, his throat and adams apple bobbing, the way his collarbone emerged a little too much, his chest, arms, legs and at last hands. Even through the clothing he could see that Steve got way too slim. When was the last time he ate before he came up to him? Steve wore one of Jonathans grey long-sleeve shirts and some black sweatpants. He grabbed the glass of water and offered it to Steve. "Thirsty?"

Steve's head snapped up and he gazed at the glass of water, greedily. His gaze wavered to Jonathan just to make sure he was allowed to take the glass. Jonathan chuckled a little and Steve took it. As he drank the younger man applied some wound disinfection on a cotton ball he put out of the first aid kit, leaning a little towards Steve. He dabbed the cotton ball onto his bruises and cuts on his face, right above the eye and on the lip. Steve inhaled sharply.

"Sorry." Just a murmur coming out of Jonathan's throat as he put the cotton ball aside. "Show me your chest." Slowly Steve pulled the shirt over his head. The younger male swallowed hard, that looked painful he raised his gaze to look at Steve. "Shall I or...?"

"Go on." Steve raised his arms, he was so much thinner than Jonathan remembered him. His chest was blue and black covered in huge bruises. With shivering hands he applied ointment onto Steve's chest. The older one shivered and goosebumps emerged on his skin, nipples perking up. Steve moaned. "Fuck that's cold." Carefully Jonathan rubbed the ointment onto his bruise and put a light bandage around his chest.

He rubbed his hands as he was done and stood up, got right into the kitchen and brought a spoon. Putting it into the soup bowl he leaned against the wall besides the sofa. "Eat."

Steve had put the shirt on again and watched the bowl. "Is this reality? Today seems to be the best day of my life. Except these bruises. You're a freaking saint Jonathan."

Jonathan got embarrassed and tried to hide his grin. Steve noticed and began to grin, to laugh and moaned painful again. "Ouch. Laughing hurts, damn." He grinned, licked his swollen lip and ate the soup like

there's no tomorrow. "Damn I think that's the best meal I had in all my life." Silent, Jonathan watched him eating. "It's not that awesome. There's more." He offered.

"Heavenly." Steve noted as he put the bowl aside and looked at Jonathan relaxed. "Guess.. I have to thank you."

"No big deal Steve. Want to talk?" Jonathan would really like to know what was going on, why he lived on the streets. Steve's eyes darkened and he had that motionless look again. "I owe you an explanation." He just murmured, not looking at Jonathan anymore, a spot on the floor seems more important.

"Really Steve? If you want to talk, I'm there to listen but I won't force you into telling me. You will tell me when you feel like it. I'm interested in your story yes, but I can wait. If you're ready, tell me, else I will wait." Jonathan crossed his arms and looked softly over to him.

"I...I... th-thanks." Steve's voice broke midsentence.

### **Author's Note:**

That's just the beginning, more chapters are following. :)

I would like to hear your opinion about this kind of AU. It's a little strange, but I hope you like it.